

# Policies and Procedures Aroostook Farm

Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station  
College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture  
University of Maine

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## Introduction

This document describes the policies and procedures for use of Aroostook Farm. Aroostook Farm supports teaching, research and public outreach activities in the areas of potato and other crop production, crop science, and organic agriculture.

Aroostook Farm is available for use by faculty and students of the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture (NSFA) and University of Maine Cooperative Extension (UMaine Cooperative Extension). Aroostook Farm is also available for use by other University of Maine faculty and students at the discretion of the associate director and facility superintendent. Faculty with appointments in the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station will have priority for land and greenhouse/laboratory allocations.

Please note that information on safety policies is provided elsewhere (“Safety Compliance and Training” on the Aroostook Farm web page). The policies and procedures for the Aroostook Farm apply to all facility users including faculty, instructors, staff, graduate and undergraduate students, and student employees.

## **Staff, Contact Information, and Availability**

### **Superintendent**

Randy Smith, Farm Superintendent  
(207)-762-8281 - office  
(207)-227-1281 - mobile  
(207)-764-6740 - fax  
[randy.smith@maine.edu](mailto:randy.smith@maine.edu) - email

### **Support Staff and Student Employees**

The Aroostook Farm employs seven full-time employees, five temporary employees during planting and harvest, and as many as five student employees. Five technical staff, who work closely with faculty researchers from the University of Maine campus, are stationed at the farm. Employees are generally not available for research or project activity. It is the responsibility of facility users to provide staffing for their projects. Users must notify the superintendent of new project employees. It is recommended that faculty introduce new employees to the superintendent and other facility staff.

### **Mailing Address**

Aroostook Farm  
59 Houlton Road  
Presque Isle, ME  
Main Office: (207)-762-8281

Normal business hours are Monday through Friday, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. Use of the facility outside of business hours is allowed with approval of the superintendent.

### **Emergency Contacts**

Emergency	911
UM Public Safety	581-4040
Randy Smith, Superintendent	227-1281
Safety and Environmental Management	581-4055
Maine Agricultural and Forest Exp. Station	581-3205
College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture	581-3202

### **Facilities Description**

#### **Aroostook Farm**

Aroostook Farm supports teaching, research, and public outreach activities associated with potato and small grain production, and crop science. Potatoes, oats, and timothy/clover for green manure are raised on the farm's 460 acres.

Aroostook Farm complex consists of a variety of buildings and amenities:

- (2) equipment storage buildings

- (1) barn with 12 lockers
- (1) utility building
- (2) plastic greenhouses
- (1) permanent greenhouse for winter use
- Superintendent's house
- (1) west annex building for pesticide storage and crop material drying
- (1) Geddes Simpson potato storage
- (1) mechanics shop
- (1) potato breeding building with potato storage
- (1) main laboratory with offices
- (1) greenhouse support building for greenhouse materials storage
- (1) Maine Potato Board potato storage research building

### **Facility Acknowledgment**

When users acknowledge that project activity occurred at the Aroostook Farm, identify the facility as Aroostook Farm, College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture. An image of the college logo is also available.

### **Regulatory Oversight**

Due to the nature of research and teaching activities, Aroostook Farm is subject to regulatory oversight from federal, state, private, and university agencies:

- United States Department of Agriculture
- Maine Board of Pesticides Control
- University of Maine Department of Safety and Environmental Management
- Maine Department of Labor

Prior to the start of research and teaching activities, users should consult with the superintendent to ensure the proposed activity is compliant with regulations set forth by the above agencies and associations.

### **Superintendent and User Responsibilities**

#### **Responsibilities of the Superintendent**

- Oversees daily management of Aroostook Farm operations.
- Facilitates research, teaching, and outreach activities of faculty and students.
- Maintains communication with facility users on projects and activities.
- Provides recommendations to facility users on facility, and field use.
- Receives and approves requests for facility space, and field space.
- Supervises staff and students employed by Aroostook Farm.
- Ensures safety and environmental compliance by all users and staff and notifies supervisors of noncompliance.
- Maintains the facility infrastructure and associated equipment.

- The superintendent is the primary contact to the University of Maine’s Facilities Management and outside contractors regarding infrastructural additions, maintenance, and repair.
- Oversees all pesticide applications and maintains appropriate documentation for the Maine Board of Pesticides Control.
- The superintendent reports to the associate director of the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station.

### **Responsibilities of Facility Users**

- Provide superintendent with advance notification of needs and future requests.
- Maintain communication with the superintendent regarding project activity.
- Adhere to all safety and use policies.
- Ensure that all staff, student employees, and students enrolled in courses complete all required safety training before working or using Aroostook Farm facilities.
- Supervise employees, student employees, and students using the facilities under their direction.
- Adhere to all operational policies listed below.
- Begin using space, fields, or animals only after approval of such request has been granted.
- Notify superintendent when project or course is complete.
- Provide material and supplies needed for research, experiments, or teaching.
- Manage and maintain experiments, research projects, and course work.
- Clean up all areas after each activity (classroom, barns, handling areas, break rooms, computer laboratories, etc.).
- Dispose of used supplies, other items into proper waste receptacles.

### **Operational Policies—Facilities**

#### **Security, Safety, Chemicals, Pesticides, and Pharmaceuticals**

##### *Security*

Aroostook Farm is open to the public and for general use during regular university business hours (7:30-4:30 M-F). After-hours use for teaching, research, and other working activities is permitted after consultation with the superintendent. After-hours users of the facility are required to notify the farm superintendent concerning their activities. No hunting is allowed on Aroostook Farm at any time by anyone. The superintendent will arrange for the removal of nuisance animals on the farm by authorized individuals.

##### *Safety*

All facility users must adhere to all university, college, and Aroostook Farm safety policies. All required training and documentation must be completed before conducting any activity associated with the Aroostook Farm facilities and lands. Information on safety policies can be found via the link for “Safety Compliance and Training” on the Aroostook Farm web page.

### *Chemical Use*

Chemicals may not be brought into Aroostook Farm without approval of the superintendent and submission of material safety data sheets (MSDS). Chemical use requires appropriate safety training. Chemical storage space is limited and approved chemicals should be purchased in the smallest quantity possible.

### *Pesticides*

Only licensed Aroostook Farm personnel may handle or apply pesticides. All pesticides brought onto Aroostook Farm must be approved by the superintendent. Permission and MSDS sheets are required before storing pesticides in pesticide-storage buildings. Pesticide storage at Aroostook Farm is located in the west annex building. All containers must be clearly labeled with the owner's name. Pesticide-storage space is limited, which makes material disposal high priority. It is the user's responsibility to remove and properly process unused pesticides for disposal. This procedure often involves a chemical pick-up by the Department of Safety and Environmental Management. Pesticides being evaluated for industry should be returned to the company sponsoring the project.

## **Supplies, General Storage, and Crop Storage**

### *Supplies*

Users are responsible for providing their own materials and supplies for experiments, research projects, and teaching. Contact the superintendent when the joint purchase of common supplies by Aroostook Farm and faculty may reduce costs.

### *General Storage*

- Request for storage space must be approved by the superintendent.
- Storage for specific projects, experiments, or teaching functions will have priority. Student clubs and team storage will be on first- come, first-served basis.
- Storage space is limited. Project-related storage is only available for short periods and should never extend past the end of the project. Supplies and materials should be purchased in quantities that will be used during the current project.
- Some long- term storage for unique studies may be available. Requests should be directed to the superintendent.
- Materials should be clearly labeled with owner's name. Unlabeled items will be disposed of or relocated.
- Project materials should be stored in designated locations approved by the superintendent.
- Stored materials must not block access or egress
- It is the user's responsibility to keep storage areas and student locker rooms clean and tidy.

### *Crop Storage—Drying Room*

- An oil-heated drying room is available at Aroostook Farm for the drying of research crops.
- Space in the drying room is limited and intent to use the drying room should be noted on the field-request form.

- The drying room should only be used for the time required to properly dry plant materials. Dry materials should either be processed, or moved to off-farm long-term storage areas. It is the user's responsibility to properly dispose of plant materials and containers.
- The cost to operate the drying room is high. Please coordinate with other users to minimize the number of days the drying room operates annually.
- Materials in the drying room should be clearly labeled with the names of the owner and the project if possible.
- Users should notify the superintendent or facility manager when materials are put into or taken out of drying room.

### **Printing/Copying Services**

Printers and copiers are for Aroostook Farm staff use only. All necessary printing and copying should be completed prior to using the Aroostook Farm facilities.

### **Maintenance Shops and Laboratory**

#### *Maintenance Shops*

Generally, only Aroostook Farm staff are permitted to use the maintenance shops. Specialized training is required when working in these areas. All equipment fabrication and repair must be approved by the superintendent and work must be performed by trained staff personnel.

#### *Laboratories*

Use of laboratories not managed by specific academic departments must be approved by the superintendent. Space should be requested prior to any activity. Only approved sanitation chemicals will be allowed in laboratories containing floor drains.

### **Operational Policies—Equipment and Vehicles**

#### **Motorized Equipment and Vehicles**

##### *Motorized Equipment*

Generally, motorized equipment (tractors, utility vehicles, and lawnmowers), are for Aroostook Farm staff use only. Exceptions can be made with authorization of the superintendent. Specialized tractor safety and driving safety documentation must be maintained to use this equipment. Any equipment brought onto Aroostook Farm facilities must be approved by the superintendent.

##### *Vehicles*

Vehicles owned and maintained by Aroostook Farm are for staff use only.

## **Power Tools and Hand Tools**

### *Power Tools*

Generally, power tools (grinders, drills, chainsaws, string trimmers, tillers, skill saws, etc.) are for Aroostook Farm staff use only. Exceptions can be made with authorization of the superintendent. Specialized training and personal protective equipment (PPE), is required to use this equipment. Any power tools brought onto Aroostook Farm facilities must be approved by the superintendent.

### *Hand Tools*

Some tools are available for general use such as rakes, shovels, hoes, manure forks, and wagons. These should be kept in good condition, cleaned, and returned immediately after use. Tools should not be removed from the facility.

## **Project-owned and Donated Equipment**

### *Project-owned Equipment*

Users are responsible for all costs (parts, maintenance, transportation, and labor) associated with project equipment purchased or acquired and brought onto the facilities. Storage of equipment must be approved by the superintendent. Special circumstances where equipment is shared between users and Aroostook Farm should be discussed with the superintendent before the equipment arrives at the facilities.

### *Donated Equipment*

Approval must be received from the superintendent before accepting donated equipment for the facilities. Cost for future maintenance and use will be considered. The user who facilitates the donation is responsible for submission of required university forms to accept donations.

### *Tractors Owned by Cooperative Extension*

There are four tractors at Aroostook Farm that are owned by Cooperative Extension:

- Ford 2810 plot tractor
- Ford 7740 mid-sized tractor
- John Deere 6400 mid-sized tractor
- John Deere 5055D plot tractor

These tractors may only be used after notifying Dr. Steve Johnson. In some instances there may be a charge associated with the use of any of these tractors. Safety training and tractor operator orientation are required before the use of the machines or any tractors on Aroostook Farm. Contact Steve Johnson at 207-554-4373 or email ([stevenj@maine.edu](mailto:stevenj@maine.edu)) for information about or to request to use these tractors.

## **Operational Policies—Field Operations**

### **Crop Amendments and Protectants**

#### *Manure/Compost*

Manure supply for use at Aroostook Farm is limited. Users should notify the superintendent if manure will be needed for research projects. Purchased manure is typically stored outdoors at a specific location on Aroostook Farm. A limited amount of compost is generally available. Compost purchases will be the responsibility of the user. Users should consult with the superintendent if bulk orders are to be stored on-farm.

#### *Fertilizer*

Fertilizer purchases for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. Aroostook Farm staff will spread fertilizer at the field not treatment level. Fertilizer is usually applied through special and/or conventional planters at Aroostook Farm.

#### *Lime*

Lime purchase and application at the field level will be the responsibility of Aroostook Farm. If lime is needed for multiple projects, users should communicate with each other and with the superintendent to minimize transportation costs and take advantage of any bulk-order discounts.

#### *Pesticides*

Pesticide purchases for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. Only licensed personnel are authorized to make pesticide applications. Aroostook Farm staff is available to make pesticide applications using tractor-mounted spraying equipment. Hand-spraying applications will be the responsibility of the licensed user or their licensed designee.

### **Field Preparation**

#### *Tillage*

Aroostook Farm staff will be responsible for field tillage operations. Users should consult with the superintendent to ensure the desired tillage tools are available. Properly trained users may also perform tillage operations with permission from the superintendent and/or Aroostook Farm staff

#### *Mulching*

Mulch purchases and hand application for specific research projects will be the responsibility of the user. A stacking site for bulk mulch orders is available at Aroostook Farm.

#### *Cultivation*

Aroostook Farm staff will be responsible for field cultivation operations. Users should consult with the superintendent to ensure the desired cultivation tools are available. Properly trained users may also perform cultivation operations with permission from the superintendent and/or Aroostook Farm staff.



### *Mowing*

Mowing field margins for research projects will be the responsibility of Aroostook Farm staff. Users should consult with Aroostook Farm staff to ensure desired equipment is available.

## **Crop Production**

### *Planting*

Aroostook Farm staff will be responsible for planting operations. Properly trained users may also perform planting operations with permission from the superintendent and/or Aroostook Farm staff. Multiple planters are available including air seeders, grain drills, and potato planters (34" rows). Users should consult with the superintendent and/or Aroostook Farm staff to ensure desired planting equipment is available.

### *Irrigation*

Irrigation hydrants are found at multiple locations at Aroostook Farm. Irrigation systems are limited and users should consult with the Aroostook Farm superintendent to ensure desired equipment is available.

### *Harvesting*

Mechanical harvesting operations will be the responsibility of Aroostook Farm staff. Hand-harvesting operations will be the responsibility of the user.

### *Transportation*

Transportation of crops from field to storage will be the responsibility of Aroostook Farm staff.

### *Storage*

Crop storage is limited. Potato storage is available on a very limited basis. There are no facilities for storing bulk grains. Temporary storage of these crops may be available. Users should consult with Aroostook Farm staff in advance if storage of the aforementioned crops will be necessary.

### *Data Collection and Sampling*

Data collection and sampling of research plots will be the responsibility of the user.

## **Operational Policies—Events**

### **Public Events**

Aroostook Farm is available for hosting university-sponsored events upon consultation with the superintendent. An event- request form must be submitted to the superintendent a minimum of 45 days before the date of the event.

Student groups requesting to hold events at Aroostook Farm must have a faculty advisor. The faculty advisor will act as a liaison between the student group and superintendent and will be responsible for coordinating the event with the superintendent and completing the required forms.

## **Request Forms**

### **Field and Plot Request Form**

Request for space or services must be made on the Crop Land Use and Staff Request Form ([pdf](#) or [Word document](#)).

### **Event Request Form**

### **Facility Use Charge**

Effective October 1, 2011, all project or activity directors requesting services at Aroostook Farm must provide funds for facility fees for basic services and/or labor costs for other services except when the activity is part of contract initiated prior to July 1, 2011. Fees and labor rates are set by the college to provide reimbursement for *direct costs* incurred at its facilities for services provided in support of individual projects and activities. Fees and labor rates apply to all research, teaching, outreach and other projects and activities requiring or requesting services. Specific information on fees and administrative procedures is provided on the Maine Agricultural and Forest Experiment Station web site ([Service Fees and Labor Rates at Farms and Greenhouses](#)). Fees and labor rates for services are established consistent with the [Policies and Procedures on Direct Cost Recovery and Sharing at Crop, Greenhouse, and Livestock Facilities](#) of the College of Natural Sciences, Forestry, and Agriculture and policies of the University of Maine Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

### **Aroostook Farm Advisory Committee**

The Aroostook Farm Advisory Committee advises the superintendent and dean/director on policies, procedures, and priorities for Aroostook Farm.

The Aroostook Farm Advisory Committee meets at least annually. The committee advises the dean/director in the following areas:

1. Priorities for equipment maintenance and replacement.
2. Priorities for infrastructure maintenance and improvement.
3. Long-range operational planning.
4. Budget management for meeting facility missions, goals, and objectives.
5. Planning and procedures for the allocation of facility space and related resources.
6. Implementation of safety procedures.

The committee also is charged with developing 5-year missions, goals, and objectives for facilities for approval by the dean/director. The committee seeks input from appropriate academic unit chairs and teaching coordinators when advice to the superintendents or dean/director may influence teaching programs.

## **Appendix A: Changes to Process for Hiring Temporary Employees at Aroostook Farm**

To reduce the number of problems with temporary employees' receiving their first checks late and other steps in the process, we are proposing some new procedures for hiring temporary employees.

- Supervisor contacts potential employees on availability and makes hiring decisions. Employees can start work on any date during a two-week pay period, but *all* university paperwork must be completed before the start of that pay period. Refer to *Hiring Schedule 2016* chart for dates.
  - Farm office will help advertize for temporary employees if the pool of returning temps is not large enough; this should be done before the paperwork submission deadline. Supervisor may request assistance from farm office staff in contacting potential employees, but the project director is *still* responsible for meeting deadlines.
  - Confirmation letter should come from supervisor so employees understand who will be supervising them.
- Within a time frame outlined in the *Hiring Schedule 2016* chart, project director notifies farm office, and provides names, desired start dates, and chartfields for each employee. Following these timelines provides 4 weeks between the start of the process and an employee's first payday.
- Farm office fills out paperwork for HR (TERF) and sends email to HR with names, start dates, and information on whether person is a returning or new employee. If new employee, a background screening process is begun and physical scheduled.<sup>1</sup>
- Farm office will route the TERF through the appropriate college/university channels and monitor progress to make sure TERF is moving through channels in timely fashion.
- NSFA Finance Office will monitor data entered by Payroll Office to make sure they use the correct address so first paper checks are mailed to Aroostook Farm.
- Safety training is required before employees can begin to work. This is the responsibility of project director/direct supervisor.
- See attached *Observations on Needs for New Employee Orientation* for other suggestions for new employees' first day.

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<sup>1</sup> Physicals and background screening must be completed before new hires can begin work.